



Dance Research Matters Networks June 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to your June 2024 Dance Research Matters Network Newsletter

Cross-Network News

Dance Research Matters mid-point event

10th September 2024, 10am-4pm (BST): ‘Making dance research legible’ [hybrid event]

Venue: [St Mary’s Guildhall, Coventry](#)

Link to register to attend in-person or online will be shared in the July 2024 newsletter.

In May 2021, communities and networks of dance researchers, educators, artists, and practitioners came together at the Dance Research Matters event which was hosted by the Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University, in partnership with the AHRC. The campaign has grown into a strategic programme to develop and support dance research networks, encourage collaboration, identify the research and investment needs for dance, and to provide targeted and impactful investment in this area. An advisory group of dance researchers from across the UK was created to support the programmes purpose, development and delivery.

Continuing the momentum created by the campaign that led to the [AHRC launching the Dance Research Matters Networks programme](#), the DRM Networks programme is holding an event in celebration of the networks and connections created through dance research in the UK.

With the theme of ‘Making dance research legible in the Creative Industries and beyond’, the event aims to facilitate knowledge exchange beyond the Networks and dance sector/dance research sector and make the dance research ecosystem more legible in relation to the Creative Industries. It also creates a space and platform that shares the journeys of the Networks thus far.

Further, the event aims to disseminate learning about the impact of dance research in a way that is accessible to the public, catalysing the spontaneous unearthing of undiscovered network potentials and niches, and identify offshoot research areas arising from groups with a connection to or informed by the Dance Research Matters Networks.

Tentative Schedule

Time	Activity
0945-1015	Arrival and registration

1015-1025	Welcome and context setting
1030-1045	Provocation
1045-1115	Keynote + Q&A
1115-1130	Tea/coffee break
1130-1335	Updates and offshoot groups from each of the Networks (25 mins each – format up to each Network)
1335-1400	Lunchbreak
1400-1430	MMEL overview + Q and A Launch of offshoot networks fund
1430-1515	Panel discussion: 'How do HE dance education and dance research provide vital skills for the Creative Industries?'
1515-1530	Tea/Coffee break
1530-1615	Session on legacy/follow-on funding lead by Vicky Hunter (imagining new funding models that offer up more cooperative and collective modes of researching)
1615-1625	Closing remarks

Thematic details:

In our December 2023 Dance Research Matters Networks discussion, the notion of making the dance research ecosystem more legible for humans and non-humans across disciplines, communities, and social institutions came up. Dance researchers may find comfort in the continued momentum of a movement of making the intangible more visible across multiple disciplines.

Within the context of networked ecosystems, the concept of 'lines' could be applied. In 'The Life of Lines', Tim Ingold writes, 'To live, every being must put out a line, and in life, these lines tangle with one another.' With lines being the simplest visual element that 'can be used to define shapes and figures, but also to indicate motion, emotion, and other elements... Lines [also] mark the outside of the image...This simple device is so effective that it is hard to remember that there is no [image], only a few black marks on a white page.' (Khan Academy)

The concept of throughlines – tunnels through which theories, concepts, and practices pass from research communities to communities of practice is significant in highlighting the relationship between research and professional practice. Similarly, the concept of connectivity/network thresholds – points at which connections spill out into other networks and communities can support the consideration of the importance of dance research beyond itself.

Objectives

1. Bring together the Dance Research Matters Networks, dance research community, users of research and wider groups and communities to exchange ideas, current projects, and points of entry into each other's spaces in-person and virtually
2. Announce the reallocation of some of the Dance Research Matters Networks Mapping budget to support offshoot networks from the funded networks.
3. Create discursive spaces for dance communities and connected sectors to share and co-develop new ideas, approaches, and activities

4. Provide an update to the Networks, dance research community, dance sector, the AHRC, and the public on developments from the Networks and the mapping work
5. Highlight emergent and urgent issues in dance research for highlighting in public discourse
6. Disseminate information through knowledge exchange networks, including media, third sector, and policymakers

Keynote speaker



[Kate Elswit](#) is a scholar–artist whose research on performing bodies combines dance history, performance theory, cultural studies, medical humanities, experimental practice, and technology. For the past decade, she has been collaborating with Harmony Bench to bring dance and the experimental digital humanities into conversation, including through the AHRC-funded projects [Visceral Histories](#), [Visual Arguments: Dance-Based Approaches to Data](#) (2022-25) and [Dunham’s Data: Katherine Dunham and Digital Methods for Dance Historical Inquiry](#) (2018-22), which won the ATHE-ASTR Award for Excellence in Digital Theatre and Performance Scholarship. They are also currently working on dance history data visualizations commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art for the upcoming exhibition [Edges of Ailey](#) (opening September 2024). Her print publications include the award-winning books [Watching Weimar Dance](#) (2014) and [Theatre & Dance](#) (2018). She received her PhD from the University of Cambridge, and is now Professor of Performance and Technology and Head of Digital Research at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, where she is co-founder of the [Centre for Performance, Technology, and Equity](#).

Panel speakers to be confirmed.

Network Updates

[Dancing Otherwise Network: Exploring Pluriversal Practices \(https://dancingotherwise.com/\)](https://dancingotherwise.com/)

From the 13th to the 15th June the Dancing Otherwise Network hosted the research event ‘Examining Pluriverses: Learning from Nature, Coalitions Kinship and Care’ at the Hawkwood Centre. The event engaged with the network’s core participants. On the 14th June the network hosted a public workshop and sharing event ‘Learning from Nature’ at Bath Space University. The event was led by Canadian artist and researcher Melanie Kloetzel and Chilean artist Marisol Vargas.

[Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network](#)

On the 22nd May and 6th June the Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network hosted two specialised PhD workshops designed for Black artists and postgraduate students interested in the intersections between Black Dance, digital technologies, environmental justice and racial equity. These workshops took place at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London, and Northern School of Contemporary Dance, Leeds, and were facilitated by network lead Dr Tia-Monique Uzor, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, and Dr Hannah Thuraisingam Robbins, University of Nottingham.

[Future Ecologies: Producing Dance Network \(FE:PDN\)](#)

On the 7th June FE:PDN hosted a hybrid network event at the Dance Hub space in Birmingham in partnership with FABRIC. The event included presentations from: Raidene Carter (Artistic Director, artsadmin), Mark Mallabone (Creative Producer Freelance) and Genevieve Say (Artistic Director, Birmingham Dance Network).

South Asian Dance Equity (SADE): The Arts that British South Asian Dance Ignores Network

On the 29th and 30th April the SADE Network organised 'South Asian Dance and LGBTQi+ Identities'. The two-day event was hosted by Baithak, UK, and co-curated by Jaivant Patel Company. On day one of the event Baithak, UK, hosted a public webinar with five artists/collectives: Nikhita Devi (UK), Komal Gandhar/DMSC (India), Raheem S. Payne (UK), Shiva Raichandani (UK) and Fazle Shairmahomed (The Netherlands). During the webinar contributors discussed how their work challenges the cisgenderism and/or heteronormativity that tends to dominate South Asian cultures, including dance. The provocations were followed by a Q&A with audience members. On the 30th April Baithak, UK, hosted an in-person event for an invited group of participants to further explore the themes set out in the webinar.

Upcoming Events

(events arranged chronologically)

South Asian Dance Equity (SADE): The Arts that British South Asian Dance Ignores Network

24th June 2024, 3-5pm: 'South Asian Dance and Caste' [online]

The SADE Network has organised a webinar event hosted by Sampad Arts, Birmingham. The event will be chaired by Dr Brahma Prakash and includes contributions from: Shireen Azam, Hanne M. de Bruin-Rajagopal, Meena Dhanda, Manish Harijan and Gowthaman Ranganathan

To attend [register here](#)

December 2024: 'South Asian Dance and Ableism'. Coordinated by Balbir Singh Dance Company, Leeds

Critical Dance Pedagogy Network

The Network has announced [four hybrid symposium events](#) which will be hosted across the UK and Northern Ireland.

11 July 2024, 9.30-4.30pm: 'Equality, diversity and inclusion' at Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE), Coventry University and online.

This symposium event will delve into the themes of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related to Critical Dance Pedagogy thinking and practice. The symposium aims to connect academics, dance educators working in secondary, FE and HE, researchers, artists, and industry stakeholders, to foster networking, collaboration and knowledge exchange through discourse and practice.

To attend [register here](#)

20 September 2024, 10-5pm: 'Pedagogy(ies) and practices' at University of Edinburgh and online.

10 January 2025: 'Leadership and Futures' at Queen's University Belfast and online.

Dancing Otherwise Network: Exploring Pluriversal Practices (<https://dancingotherwise.com/>)

October 2024: Producing the Pluriverse: 'Power, Place, Promotion: Power and spatial dynamics in dance production'. Online.

January 2025: 'Moving Otherwise: Making Change'. Venue: Kingston University. Open to the public.

Opportunities

Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network

The Digital Black Dance Ecologies project is offering three seed commissions to support innovative projects that explore and celebrate Black dance cultures through digital technologies. These commissions are an opportunity for Black artists to develop their digital practice work while contributing to an emerging and dynamic digital dance ecology. Each selected artist will receive funding, resources, and mentorship to bring their vision to life.

[Seed Commission #1:](#) In collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society, Milkit Studio and Antoine Marc

Applications close: Wednesday 19th June 2024 (17:00 GMT)

Digital Black Dance Ecologies is commissioning a **digital dance piece** that delves into the connection between Blackness/Black identities and the environment. We envision this piece as an installation featuring virtual and live elements using digital screens, projections, or live performance.

[Further details of the commission are here](#)

[Seed Commission #2:](#) In collaboration with Serendipity, Unwired Studio, and Clémence Debaig

Applications close: Monday 24th June 2024 (12:00 GMT)

Digital Black Dance Ecologies in collaboration with [Serendipity](#), [Unwired Studio](#), and [Clémence Debaig](#) are commissioning a **digital dance piece** that explores the relationship between traditional and embodied technologies and digital technologies.

Themes of the commission could include but are not limited to:

- Spiritual Realms
- Journeying
- Time Travel
- Ancient and future dance forms and practice
- Myths
- Folk music

[Further details of the commission are here](#)

[Seed commission #3:](#) In collaboration with the Unwired Studio and Clémence Debaig

Applications close: Monday 24th June 2024 (12:00 GMT)

Digital Black Dance Ecologies in collaboration with [Unwired Studio](#) and [Clémence Debaig](#) are commissioning an **immersive piece** that explores a theme of the successful artists choice in relation to the [Digital Black Dance Ecologies Project](#) and its aims.

[Further details of the commission are here](#)

Links to Networks' main pages

(in alphabetical order)

Critical Dance Pedagogy Network:

<https://www.criticaldancepedagogy.org/home>

Digital Black Dance Ecologies Network:

<https://www.digitalblkdance.org>

<https://twitter.com/DBDEproject>

<https://www.instagram.com/dbdeproject>

Dancing Otherwise Network

<https://dancingotherwise.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/dancingotherwise/>

Future Ecologies Network (FE:PDN)

(website under construction)

South Asian Dance Equity (SADE)

<https://www.akademi.co.uk/sade-project-launch/>

<https://www.sampad.org.uk/projects/south-asian-dance-equity-sade/>

<https://www.instagram.com/southasiandanceequity/>